Department of LABOR AND INDUSTRIES

Ergonomics @ work

Description

When stacking wallboard at the end of the production line, GP Gypsum, in Tacoma, Washington, uses cut and stacked pieces of wallboard as spacers, which they call sleutters. They used to have a machine that would only score the wallboard for them, so they would have to fold thousands of sleutters by hand. If the machine didn't score the wallboard deep enough, they would often have to use the palm of their hand as a hammer to break the board. This was both a risk of hand and wrist injuries, as well as a very time-consuming task. To solve the problem, they installed a machine that cuts, folds and glues the sleutters for them. Now, they're even thinking about refining the process so that the sleutters come out narrower, which will reduce their weight by 25 percent.

The old way: Breaking and folding the wallboard by hand.

The new way: This machine automates the sleutter-making job.

Narrower sleutters (right) would weigh 25% less.

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